I Claim:

1. A method for inputting control information into a household appliance, which comprises:

performing a biometric fingerprint recognition of a respective user with a biometric fingerprint recognition device of a household appliance;

assigning the user to one of several authorization levels based on the biometric fingerprint recognition; and

enabling at least one of a predetermined minimum range of functions and a predetermined minimum range of setting options of the appliance when at least one of a biometric recognition failure occurs and operation by an unknown user occurs.

2. The method according to claim 1, which further comprises assigning the user to one of several user levels based upon the biometric recognition of the user.

3. The method according to claim 1, which further comprises storing an item of individual supplementary information in the appliance for each user.

4. The method according to claim 1, which further comprises assigning an item of supplementary information to each authorization level.

5. The method according to claim 1, which further comprises activating supplementary information in the form of individual settings dependent upon a recognition of the user's fingerprint.

6. The method according to claim 5, which further comprises activating supplementary information by the fingerprint as a deviation from defaults for functions in different authorization levels.

7. The method according to claim 1, which further comprises granting children at least one of minimal user authorization and minimal setting authorization upon biometric recognition of a respective child's fingerprint.

8. The method according to claim 7, which further comprises:

providing a light with the appliance; and

authorizing children to turn on the light as the minimal user authorization.

9. The method according to claim 7, which further comprises:

providing a stove as the appliance; and

authorizing children to at least one of turn on the light of the stove and to activate a temperature of the stove suitable for reheating prepared foods as the minimal user authorization.

10. The method according to claim 7, which further comprises:

providing a stove as the appliance; and

authorizing children to at least one of turn on the light of the stove and to activate a temperature of the stove between approximately 50° and 60° C as the minimal user authorization.

11. The method according to claim 1, which further comprises protecting the appliance against unintentional changes once an authorized user completes at least one of a setting and a programming of the appliance.

12. The method according to claim 1, which further comprises authorizing changes of the appliance only after a new subsequent identification of an authorized user occurs.

13. The method according to claim 1, which further comprises activating a childproofing function of the appliance by placement of a predetermined finger of an authorized user.

14. The method according to claim 13, which further comprises deactivating the childproofing function by reapplication of the predetermined finger of the authorized user.

15. The method according to claim 1, which further comprises activating a childproofing function of the appliance by placement of a predetermined finger of an authorized user and not running through appliance menus.

16. The method according to claim 15, which further comprises deactivating the childproofing function by reapplication of the predetermined finger of the authorized user and not running through the appliance menus.

17. The method according to claim 1, which further comprises performing the biometric recognition with a capacitive measurement of the fingerprint.

18. The method according to claim 17, which further comprises performing the capacitive measurement of the fingerprint with a semiconductor array.

19. The method according to claim 17, which further comprises performing the capacitive measurement of the fingerprint with a silicon chip.

20. The method according to claim 1, which further comprises performing the biometric recognition by optically scanning the user's finger.

21. The method according to claim 20, which further comprises performing the optical scanning with one of a CCD chip or a row sensor.

22. The method according to claim 1, which further comprises:

centrally monitoring at least one of:

control information entry; and

at least one of control and monitoring of appliances,

at a location in a networked household.

23. The method according to claim 22, which further comprises at least one of storing and editing information selected from the group consisting of cost data, usage information, and consumption information at the appliance.

24. The method according to claim 23, which further comprises at least one of storing and editing information selected from the group consisting of cost data, usage information, and consumption information at the appliance in a central device.

25. The method according to claim 23, which further comprises at least one of storing and editing the information in a multi-dimensional user memory.

26. The method according to claim 23, which further comprises outputting the information as at least one of optical and acoustical information one of during and after recognition of the user.

27. The method according to claim 26, which further comprises outputting the information over a local network.

28. The method according to claim 27, which further comprises at least one of reading the user memory, editing

the memory, and processing the information as data by an external service provider one of across an interface at the appliance, over a local network, and over a data line.

29. In a household appliance, a device for entering control information, comprising:

a biometric recognition device for reading a respective user's fingerprint and supplying an output signal;

an at least partly electronic control connected to said biometric recognition device, said control receiving said output signal and having a processor programmed to recognize the respective user based upon said output signal;

a user memory connected to said control and to said biometric recognition device, said user memory having a hierarchical structure assigning a respective user to one of several authorization levels; and

said processor is programmed to enable at least one of a predetermined minimum range of functions and a predetermined minimum range of setting options given at least one of a failure of a biometric recognition and an operation by an unknown user.

30. The device according to claim 29, wherein said user memory has a hierarchical structure assigning a respective user to one of several user levels.

31. The device according to claim 29, wherein:

said user memory has a hierarchical structure with user levels; and

said processor is programmed to assign a respective user to one of said user levels.

32. The device according to claim 29, wherein said user memory stores individual supplementary information for each user.

33. The device according to claim 29, wherein said processor is programmed to transmit control information to at least one of other devices and other appliances.

34. The device according to claim 29, wherein said processor is to be connected to a local network.